

daily employed in assisting in various labours about the farm, garden, kitchen, engine-house, cattle yards, grading and filling, improving about the new wings, etc. * * * I begin to feel that we are a step in advance of most other American institutions in furnishing desirable employment and diversions for our male patients. But we are seeking earnestly some out-of-door employment for our females, where they can have the benefit of air and sunlight."

The average of male patients employed is large.

The account which the Doctor gives of the conduct of visitors in the wards of this hospital, furnishes the writer of these notices the opportunity to express his conviction that the indiscriminate admission to the apartments of patients, in our institutions for the insane, of persons not connected with those institutions, is a practice utterly unbecoming to a people claiming to possess the common feelings of humanity.

P. E.

ART. XXII.—*Therapeutics and Materia Medica; a Systematic Treatise on the Action and Uses of Medicinal Agents, including their Description and History.* By ALFRED STILLÉ, M. D., Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine and of Clinical Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania, &c. &c. &c. Third edition, revised and enlarged. In 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 824 and 864. Philadelphia: Henry C. Lea, 1868.

THE third edition of Professor Stillé's work on *Therapeutics and Materia Medica* lies before us fresh from the press of Mr. Henry C. Lea, of Philadelphia. The first edition appeared in 1860, the second in 1864, and the present one bears on its title-page the date of 1868. In the short period of eight years no less than three editions of this elaborate, not inexpensive, and scientific work have been called for. Like its predecessors, it is in two volumes, which contain somewhat more than eight hundred pages each. The fact of a demand for three editions of such a work in so short a time is sufficient testimony to its value. But more than this, we regard the demand for it as not less honourable to the medical profession of the country than gratifying to its author. To seek for and appreciate a work like this implies, to say the least, a creditable amount of culture on the part of the physicians of our country. We may be hopeful of their future when such books are in demand.

We expressed our estimate of the value and character of Dr. Stillé's treatise when the first edition of it appeared. A longer and closer acquaintance with it has not changed the favourable opinion we then formed, unless, perhaps, to make us value it more now than we did then. It is, therefore, sufficient for us to chronicle the appearance of the present edition, and to congratulate the author and the profession upon its publication.

So far as we have been able to examine this edition it does not differ largely from its predecessors. Yet there is evidence of the revision and enlargement indicated on the title-page. The enlargement, we are glad to notice, has not materially increased the size of the work. The two volumes of the second edition contained an aggregate of 1595 pages. The two volumes of the present edition contain an aggregate of 1688 pages. This is an increase of less than a hundred pages, and with this increase the two volumes do not make so bulky a work as the first edition. Such keeping within due bounds, such slowness of growth in mere magnitude, we regard as a positive merit; especially in a country like ours, where wordiness is a national sin, and one of which even scientific writers are not wholly guiltless. The subjects treated of in this edition for the first time are chromic acid, permanganate of potassa, the sulphites of soda, carbolic acid, nitrous oxide, rhigolene, and Calabar bean. Of these, the account of the last mentioned article is the most important contribution. It is a model for a text-book or general work on *materia medica* of physiological and therapeutical description. The article on bromine and the bromide of potassium is essentially new, and, on the whole, is the best summary we have met with of what is known about them. It contains the results of the investigations of

M. Voisin, of the recent and admirable experiments of MM. Martin-Damourette, and Pelvet, and the earlier ones of M. Puche. We were disappointed in not finding any account of the bromide of ammonium among the bromides or elsewhere. We also looked in vain for the iodide of ammonium and for iodoform. In the discussion of alcohol we were glad to observe a reference to the recent experiments of Dr. Lombard upon the action of alcohol on animal temperature, and also to those of Dr. Anstie, of London, with regard to its general physiological action and elimination. We did not discover, however, any reference to the late excellent monograph of Legras. At the present time, when the friends and opponents of alcohol, in all its forms, err equally in the extremes of their praise and censure, we are glad to find a calm and scientific discussion of its relation to the human system; and a result arrived at, which will commend itself alike to the physiologist, the physician, and the moralist, though it may be condemned both by the prohibitionist and the free trader in rum.

Dr. Stillé's work is so good that we wish it were better. It compares favourably with any similar treatise in any language. For the use of the medical student and of the general practitioner no better work on *materia medica* can be found. It states what is known at present of the physiological action of drugs with greater fulness and clearness than any other compendium of *materia medica*, unless, perhaps, we except Dr. Edward John Waring's book on *Practical Therapeutics*, and this is often inferior, even in its physiological statements, to the treatise of Professor Stillé. Yet the latter does not present so complete an account of this matter as should be done and might be done. It does not point out the intimate connection between the physiological action and the therapeutical use of each article discussed, nor show how the practitioner must make the first guide him to the last. We are aware that this is no easy thing to do, and that in the case of many agents of the *materia medica*, science has not advanced far enough to do it at all. Still, a great deal has been accomplished in this direction already; more will be done in the future. The present demand and necessity of rational therapeutics are for the study of medicinal agents from the stand-point, not of their empirical employment, but of their physiological action. We wish that one so admirably qualified for the task as Dr. Stillé is had done this and put it into the work before us. Space might have been found for such statements, without increasing the bulk of the volumes, simply by curtailing or omitting the record of the opinions or of the experiments of a number of practitioners, whose opinions and experiments, however honest or well-meant, are of little value. The physician cares very little to know that M. Sée has given strychnia in epidemic cholera, or that Dr. Johnson has applied it over a blistered coccyx, but it concerns him a great deal to know as definitely as possible what the physiological action, the absorption and elimination, and behaviour of strychnia in the system are, and then he can use it rationally.

We should, moreover, have been glad to have found in this edition some account of articles that are not mentioned in it. Little or nothing is said about oxygen or carbonic acid as agents of the *materia medica*. Yet Demarquay has written a monograph, of not less than eight hundred pages, on the physiological action and remedial use of these two agents alone. We found no notice of leptandrin or pepsin, or of the hypophosphite of soda, or of the hypophosphite of lime. It would not have been a blemish if some account of these articles, and perhaps of others, had occupied the pages devoted to *dracontium* and *succinum*, to *armoracia* and *carota*.

We do not mean these remarks as strictures, but only as suggestions. We have been led into them by the great excellence of Dr. Stillé's work (and do not wish to extend them). We have already said more than we intended when we began this notice. Lest we should be misunderstood, let us repeat a previous statement, that we regard this work as the best one on *materia medica* in the English language; and as such it deserves the favour it has received. The typography of the work is excellent. A copious index, both of diseases and of remedies, facilitates the investigations of the student.

E. H. C.